

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

PUTTING THE WEATHER FORECASTS TO WORK FEB. 1931

A radio talk by Arthur J. DeMars, Weather Bureau, delivered through Station WRC and 39 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, January 15, 1931.

We shall now continue the series of talks begun last Tuesday, and tell you a few of the uses made of the daily weather forecasts. These forecasts are predictions of rainfall and temperature for from 36 to 48 hours following the time of issue.

Rainfall has a direct bearing on the work of construction companies. As cement work must be protected from rain for 24 to 48 hours after the cement is laid, it is of the utmost importance that these companies should know in advance whether or not rain is expected during the two days following the laying of the cement. When rainfall is expected, plans are made to assign men employed in digging operations to other work. Manufacturing companies constantly make use of rainfall forecasts. Lime, cement, brick, drain tile, and sewer pipe material all require protection from rain during the process of manufacture. Photographic firms and motion picture people working on a large scale find these forecasts helpful in planning for panoramic views. City departments determine the number of teams needed in sprinkling the streets, and in winter when snow is expected, plans are made to organize groups of men to remove the snow from the streets, and to have snow plows held in readiness at advantageous points in the city and on the National and State highways. When sleet is expected, telephone and telegraph companies concentrate their line-crews in the area likely to be affected.

Railroad companies guard against washouts, and irrigation companies control the output of water according to expected conditions of rainfall. Physicians use the forecasts in advice to patients suffering with inflammations of the throat, nose, or ear, where it is expedient that the sufferer should be kept indoors.

These forecasts are also used by dentists, many of whom make appointments for bright days and reserve their plate work for days with inclement weather. A knowledge of temperature and moisture conditions in advance is of assistance in blast-furnace operations in determining the quality of the output. The farmer makes constant use of rain forecasts as they enable him to plan the next day's work to the best advantage. Inasmuch as the rain forecasts have so bearing on the agricultural activities throughout the country, a more detailed account of this relation will be given later in the series of these talks.

Temperature changes have a marked effect on the daily activities of the people in general, upon industry in nearly all its branches, and especially upon agriculture. Warnings of decided changes in temperature are incorporated into the daily forecasts for protection to property from injury or destruction. The warnings of frosts and freezing weather are of immense value to fruit, sugar, tobacco, cranberry, and market gardening interests. Transportation companies make ~~use of~~ continued use of temperature forecasts in all of their shipments, protecting shipments of perishable commodities from extremes of heat and cold. The daily forecasts and the reports of general weather conditions assist in determining the

points to which many shipments of perishable articles are directed, in order to meet the irregular demands that are frequently dependent upon the kind of weather that prevails in a given section. The uses of temperature forecast in the cities are more varied than is generally supposed. These forecasts are used by greenhouses, street railways, garages, merchants, natural-gas companies, coal dealers, ice factories, and others too numerous to mention at this time. Charity organizations prepare to meet increased demands for food and fuel, and thus minimize suffering among the poor. A more detailed account of coldwave warnings, frost warnings, and other severe-weather warnings will be given later on in this series. My time is up, folks, but I'll be back next Thursday to tell you how warnings of storms and hurricanes are put in use for the protection of lives and property.